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 Examiner: VANAMAN, Frank B.

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REMARKS

By the present amendment, claims 23, 29, 32, 34-37, 46, 47, and 49-51 have been amended; claims 55-60 have been added; and claims 24, 31, 33, 40-45 and 52-54 have cancelled. Claims 1-23 were previously cancelled. Claims 27, 30, 34-36, and 39 were previously withdrawn from consideration. Claims 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 37, 38, 46-51, and 55-60 are presently pending. Claim 49 is allowed.

Examiner had previously rejected, *inter alia*, claim 23 as anticipated by Kimura (US Pat. No. 4,425,976). Applicants have amended claim 23 in a manner that they believe overcomes the Examiner's rejection. Specifically claim 23 now recites that the engine comprises a removable cover that at last in part defines a housing and that when the cover is removed from the engine at least one of the driving gear and the reduction gear may be removed from the shaft on which that gear is disposed without removal of the shaft itself. Claim 23 further recites that the drive shaft may be removed from the engine without removal of the driven gear from the engine.

Amended claim 23 is clearly novel over Kimura. Applicants can find no structure in Kimura that corresponds to the removable cover of applicants' claim. Specifically, claim 23 recites "a driving gear disposed on the output shaft of the engine within the housing", "a reduction gearing including at least one reduction gear disposed on an intermediate shaft within the housing", and "at least one of the driving gear and the reduction gear being releasably connected to the shaft on which it is disposed such that when the cover is removed from the engine that gear may be removed from the engine without the removal of its shaft". Examiner seems to have identified the "housing portion adjacent 68" of Kimura as corresponding to the cover of claim 23. The crankshaft 30 of Kimura corresponds to the "output shaft of the engine" as set forth in the claim. Gear 35 of Kimura corresponds to the "driving gear" as set forth in the claim. There is nothing in either the specification or the drawings of Kimura to indicate that gear 35 is removable from crankshaft 30. Moreover, even if gear 35 were removable from crankshaft 30, because of the layout of the various components of the engine, it is clear that removal of the housing portion adjacent 68 would not allow for this to happen.

Claim 23 further recites "a reduction gearing including at least one reduction gear disposed on an intermediate shaft within the housing". Either shaft 31 or shaft 32 could correspond to the "intermediate shaft" set forth in the claim. Were it shaft 31, either gears 36, 40, 41, or 42 could correspond to the "reduction gear" set forth in the claim. There is nothing in either the specification or the drawings of Kimura to indicate that any of these gears (36, 40, 41, 42) are removable from shaft 31. Moreover even if any of them were removable from shaft 31, because of the layout of the various components of the engine, it is clear that removal of the housing portion adjacent 68 would not allow for this to happen. It is the same situation were one to consider shaft 32 as the "intermediate shaft" set forth in the claim. In this case, either gears 54, 55, 56, 86 could correspond to the "reduction gear" set forth in the claim. Again, there is nothing to indicate the any of these gears (54, 55, 56, 86) are removable from shaft 32. Even if any of them were, removal of the housing portion adjacent 68 would not allow for this to happen, for several reasons. Firstly, examining closely Fig. 8 and in particular the bearing 37, there is a lip on the housing retaining the bearing in its place. The bearing cannot be slid past the lip. It is evident that the shaft 32 is designed to be removed from the engine in a direction opposite that of the housing portion adjacent 68. Thus removal of that housing portion cannot allow for the removal of any of the gears (54, 55, 56, 86). Moreover even if this were not the case, the opening (which is currently being occupied by bearing 37) is simply not large enough to allow for gear 54 to

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pass through it. It is clear than that there is no structure in Kimura that meets the limitation that "at least one of the driving gear and the reduction gear being releasably connected to the shaft on which it is disposed such that when the cover is removed from the engine that gear may be removed from the engine without the removal of its shaft". Claim 23 is novel over Kimura for this reason alone.

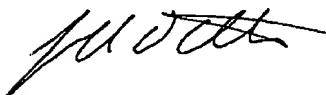
Furthermore, claim 23 now recites "a driven gear disposed on the drive shaft within the housing, the driven gear being releasably connected to the drive shaft through a connecting element such that the drive shaft may be removed from the engine without removal of the driven gear from the engine". With respect, it is clear that there is no structure in Kimura that meets this limitation. There is nothing in the drawings nor the specification to indicate that the driven gear 87 is releasably connected to the drive shaft 6 such that the drive shaft may be removed from the engine without removal of the driven gear. Indeed, it appears to the Applicants from the drawings that the driven gear 87 is welded or otherwise fixedly connected to the drive shaft 6 such that the two are only removable from the engine as a unit. Again, for this reason alone, Claim 23 is novel over Kimura.

Claims 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 37, 38, 46-51 and 55-60, each depend from claim 23 and recite additional features of the invention. They are believed to be patentable for both reasons.

Claims 27, 30, 34-36, and 39 were previously withdrawn as being directed to a non-elected embodiment. Assuming claim 23 is allowed, in view of their dependency therefrom, rejoinder and allowance thereof is requested.

Applicants believe that all of the claims of the application are now in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that any additional modification are necessary to advance the prosecution of the present application, he is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number below

Respectfully submitted,



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